

Mrs Lucy M. Barbe

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A

VALEDICTORY SERMON,

DELIVERED

IN CHRIST CHURCH,

RALEIGH, N. C.

BY

REV. GEORGE W. FREEMAN, D. D.

ON HIS RELINQUISHING THE PASTORAL CHARGE
OF SAID CHURCH.

RALEIGH:

PRINTED BY WESTON R. GALES, OFFICE OF THE RALEIGH REGISTER.

1841.

VALEBICATORY SERMON,

DELIVERED

IN CHRIST CHURCH

BALEIGH, N. C.

BY REV. GEORGE W. FLEMING, D. D.

ON HIS RESIGNING THE PASTORAL CHARGE

OF SAID CHURCH.

BALEIGH:

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1857.

SERMON.

II CORINTHIANS, XIII CHAP. 11.

“Finally, Brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

THESE words were addressed to the Christian disciples at Corinth. Among these Corinthians, St. Paul had formerly laboured for the space of nearly two years; having been the first to set before them the Gospel of the grace of God.—During this time, he had had the satisfaction of witnessing the conversion of considerable numbers to the Christian faith, and of seeing the Church well and permanently established. But being afterwards called away by other duties, he soon had the mortification to learn, that the good work, which he had been instrumental in accomplishing, had become, sadly marred by the introduction of a contentious and schismatical spirit; that the Church, which he had bestowed so much pains in establishing, was split up into parties; that grievous abuses, both of Christian doctrine and Christian practice, had crept in among them; and that, through the machinations of an unauthorized Teacher, his own influence and authority were greatly diminished. Being moved by this information, he wrote with promptitude his *first Epistle*; in which, he boldly asserted his spiritual authority over them; exposed the insidious arts of the self-constituted Apostle; reproved the Corinthians for their errors and excesses, and threatened them with the strong arm of discipline.

This letter, having produced the desired effect, in awakening them to a just sense of their faults and bringing them to a deep feeling of penitence, the compassionate Apostle wrote

to them *again*, in order to *comfort* them in their sorrow, occasioned by his former severity, to prepare them for an intended visit, and to confirm them in those Christian doctrines and principles which he had, from the first, so carefully inculcated.

In this Epistle, he employed considerable space in apologizing for himself against certain *charges* and *insinuations* which had been thrown out, respecting his sincerity and integrity in the discharge of his Ministry, and in justifying his conduct by recounting the evidences of his Apostleship, the scenes of suffering in which he had borne a distinguished part, and the labours which he had undergone, and the doctrines which he had preached in the course of his Ministry. In conclusion, he bade them, for the present, an affectionate farewell; summing up the particulars of his parting advice, in the words of the Text—"Finally, Brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

And, brethren, may I not with propriety adopt these words of the Apostle as the basis of *my* parting counsel to you?—Though *no Apostle, certainly*, in the sense in which St. Paul was; though destitute of inspiration, though standing at an immeasurable distance below him in authority, in zeal, in wisdom, in devotedness to the cause of our common Master; yet, like him, may I not, on this last occasion of my appearance before you as your Minister, refer to the past exercise of my Ministry among you, and leave with you a word of exhortation with respect to the future?

When I came first among you, "I came not," as you will readily bear witness, "*with excellency of speech, or of wisdom;*" and during the space of eleven years, I have continued with you, not in any vain confidence of an ability and strength at all *proportionate to the importance of the station* which I have occupied, but "*in weakness, and fear, and much trembling.*" Nevertheless, according to my

ability, and agreeably to my understanding of the truth of God, I have made known unto you the way of life. I commenced my Ministry here, by spreading before you, from this same Epistle of St. Paul, the nature and obligations of the *Christian ministry*, together with the correlative duty of *those* for whom that ministry is provided. *Ambassadors* for Christ, *heralds* of the Cross, *stewards* of the mysteries of God, *watchmen* upon the walls of Zion, *we* are called upon, (I showed you from the Apostle,) to “renounce the hidden things of dishonesty,” not to “walk in craftiness,” nor to “handle the word of God deceitfully,” “but, by *manifestation of the truth*, to commend ourselves,” if possible, “to every man’s conscience in the sight of God;” and in furtherance of this great object, to “preach not *ourselves*, but *Christ Jesus the Lord*, and *ourselves your servants* for Jesus sake.” And having shown you what it was to preach one’s self, and what to preach Christ Jesus the Lord, I inferred and inculcated *your duty* in relation to a preached Gospel—proving, that if *we*, the Ministers of Jesus Christ, are bound to lay aside all selfish considerations, and to preach unto you the *pure Gospel of Christ*, the obligation is equally strong upon you, to *receive* and *profit* by our preaching.

Thus it was that I *commenced* my Ministry as a Preacher of the Gospel among you; and from that time to the present moment, it has been my constant aim to set before you, with all plainness, and with what of power I possessed, the doctrines and the precepts of the blessed Gospel of Peace—the *whole truth* as it is in Jesus—and to urge upon you, by the aid of such considerations as the vast importance of your eternal interests most readily suggested, to *receive* the truth in sincerity, to *embrace* the hope set before you, and thus to “lay up in store for yourselves, a good foundation against the time to come, that you might lay hold on eternal life.”

To this end I have said much to you of your naturally sinful, helpless, perishing condition, labouring, by appeals to

your own experience and observation, as well as *to the holy Scriptures*, to convince you of this fundamental truth; so that being made sensible of your disease and its fatal consequences, you might become anxious for relief, and be induced earnestly to apply to that glorious remedy which the mercy of Heaven has provided.

This remedy, I have taught, is to be found in the great, the tremendous sacrifice of the Cross; by which, atonement was made for sin, so that God might consistently with justice pardon the sinner, and through which, the gift of the Holy Spirit was procured for the illumination of your understandings, the conversion of your hearts, and the sanctification of your whole nature, soul, body and spirit. And *to this sacrifice of the Cross*, I have constantly exhorted you to apply, with penitent and contrite hearts, in the full assurance of faith that your application would not be rejected—pointing you, for proof, to the kindly invitation of the Son of God himself to “all the weary and heavy laden” to “come unto him” and “find rest unto their souls,” and his gracious declaration, that “him that cometh unto him he would in no wise cast out.” I have encouraged you by the example of the prodigal son, to “arise and go to your Father,” and by referring you to the most solemn asseveration of our blessed Lord, that “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.”

I have exhorted you to “*strive* to enter in at the strait gate,” and urged the necessity of so doing from the consideration that “many will *seek* to enter in” who “shall not be able,” because they seek not earnestly and perseveringly, or because they seek amiss—and I have exhorted you to labour diligently to “make your calling and your election sure” for the reason, that though “many are called,” there are but “few chosen,” and that it is only *they* who “*continue in the word of Christ*,” that will be counted his “disciples indeed.”

I have cautioned you against mistaking the use of the outward forms and the *profession* of religion, for religion itself; showing you, by the case of the Pharisee and Publican, that God looks at the real emotions of the heart, rather than to the expressions of the lips, and that he who approaches the mercy seat with the earnest cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," will go down to his house justified, rather than *he* who may boastfully exclaim, "God I thank thee that I am not as other men are;" and proving that no imagined perfections of character will avail you in the sight of God, while it can be *emphatically* said to you, as our blessed Lord once said to an amiable youth, "*one thing thou lackest*;" that, though it is easy to *say* to the author of our holy religion, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," yet he who would be the disciple of Christ *in reality*, must not only *say*, but *do*—must "deny himself and take up his cross and follow him;" that "not every one that saith unto him Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that *doeth* the will" of God; that whatsoever a man's profession may be, if he be not truly "*for Christ, he is against him*;" if he gather not *with* him he *scattereth abroad*; and that "if any man have not the *spirit* of Christ, he is *none of his*."

I have warned you of the fruitlessness and the fatality of attempting to "*serve two masters*," so opposite as are God and the world; of the great danger you incur, by such an attempt, of coming under the condemnation of those who are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" of the fatuity of suffering yourselves to "be deceived" by the vain hope that you may continue to "*sow to the flesh*" and yet "*reap of the spirit*;" of the folly of delaying your repentance, like Felix, "to a more convenient season," or presuming, like some of old, on the "long suffering of God," as if he were "*slack concerning his promises*" and threatenings, "as some *men* count slackness."

I have warned you also against the delusion of expecting

to be justified before God, either by your own good works, or by a barren and unfruitful faith—against the imprudence of affording opportunity to “any man to spoil you of your faith through philosophy and vain deceit;” and against the awful danger, to which you are liable, of being “hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

In seasons of trial and affliction, I have counselled you “not to despise the chastening of the Lord,” remembering that “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,” that “they who sow in tears shall reap in joy,” and that, if you “cast your burden on the Lord, he will sustain you.” In the hour of doubt and despondency, I have encouraged you to “wait still upon the Lord,” in the full confidence that he would “strengthen your hearts,” to “be of good comfort and arise for he calleth you to him,” and, under the severest trials, *not* to “fear,” for, if you do indeed belong to the “little flock” of Christ, you have the assurance that “it is your father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

In fine, so far as space of time, and my abilities have allowed, I have fully spread before you, I trust, the blessed Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. “I have not *shunned* to declare unto you the *whole counsel* of God;” and, I think I may say, that it has ever been my principal aim to render *that* “*counsel*” effectual to your spiritual and eternal well-being, by striving as much as in me lay, to keep always in view the great object of my ministry, so as to be able in sincerity to say, “God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.”

But, brethren, these things are not said by way of boasting. Alas! how little reason have I to glory in what I have done! Even if “the *spirit*” had always been “willing,” O, how weak has been the *flesh*! Had I been diligent and faithful in performing among you all that it was in my power to do, or, possessing the ability, had I fully discharged all the duties

appertaining to my station, still I should have had no ground for boasting; but must have acknowledged myself to be "an unprofitable servant," who had "done no more than it was his duty to do." But now, when I look back on the past, and call up in review the numerous occasions when I might be justly charged, by him whom I profess to serve, *with apathy*, with slothfulness, with neglect; when I look over the field in which I have been so long labouring, and see so little really accomplished for the glory of Christ and *the salvation* of the souls committed to my trust, I find, you may well conceive, much greater cause for the deepest humility and sorrow and prostration of spirit, than for any thing like exultation and glorying. No, brethren, God forbid that I should seek to magnify my weak, my exceedingly imperfect services in the Redeemer's cause among you.—My *sole reason* for this slight recapitulation, is, that thus recalling to your minds *some* of the truths you have been taught, I may peradventure, lead you to bring yourselves into judgment, and to decide how far you have discharged *your* duty, in *receiving* the truth into an honest and good heart, and bringing forth fruit to the honour and glory of God—how far you have been "*doers* of the word, and not *hearers* only." And happy will it be, brethren, both for *you* and for *me*, if the result of such retrospect and self-examination, shall be deep contrition for our past remissnesses and unprofitableness, and a greater degree of earnestness, a more hearty and thorough engagedness in the great work, which, as Christians, we all have to do.

Having thus briefly called your attention to the past, I would now direct it to the future. As this day terminates our connexion as Pastor and flock, as this is my last address to you in that endearing relation, it seems to me not unfit, it seems exceedingly appropriate, that I should address you in the language of the Apostle—"Finally, Brethren, *farewell*. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Permit me then to explain, to enlarge upon, and to apply, this farewell advice of the Apostle to the Corinthians, *as my parting counsel* to you. And should you receive it in the same spirit of sincerity and affection in which it is offered, I cannot but cherish the hope that it will not have been tendered in vain, but will prove to you a word fitly spoken and in season—yea, even a “savour of life unto life” to your souls.

The first part of the Apostle’s exhortation is “Be perfect.” *This*, taken literally according to the translation, means, “go on unto perfection—come not to a stand in your Christian profession—be not content with moderate attainments, but aim at the full completion of the Christian character—labour after perfection in holiness, perfection in knowledge; cherish every grace and every virtue unto maturity; and cease not your exertions till ready to be crowned with the cheering sentence in a better world, “well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

This, certainly, *is the doctrine of Scripture*, whether it be inculcated in this particular place or not; and I may well be excused, if I embrace the occasion, briefly to apply it.—Some people seem to think they have done enough in the way of religion, and for their own souls, when they have summoned up sufficient resolution to make a public profession of the faith of the Gospel—and that after this, provided they are not positively and flagrantly vicious, they are very good Christians and have but little more to do. But, brethren, let it *not* be so with *you*. Remember that your public profession of Christianity in the sacraments and ordinances of the Church, was but the *commencement* of a work, which you then covenanted to *carry on*, diligently and without intermission—the *beginning* of a *warfare* with the great enemies of your salvation, “the world, the flesh and the Devil,” in which you solemnly pledged yourselves to “fight manfully” as the “faithful Soldiers” of Jesus Christ, even “*unto the end of your lives.*”

You have been taught that the Christian life is progressive (*even* like the morning light which shines more and more unto the perfect day)—that you are to “*grow* in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”—and that you must be *always pressing forward* “towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” or you can never hope to attain unto “the end of your faith,” “the salvation of your souls.” Be not satisfied, then, with a *low standard* in your religion—think it not enough, that you are outwardly observant of the Lord’s day, constant in your attendance on public worship, exact in your private devotions, scrupulous in the daily reading of the Scriptures, and moral in your life and conversation in the world; but strive also, after *holiness* of heart and life. Aim to be truly converted to God, and thoroughly imbued with *the spirit* of his Son’s Gospel. To this end pray, continually, to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, “that he would grant you to be strengthened with might *by his spirit in the inner man*; that *Christ may dwell in your hearts* by faith; that ye being *rooted and grounded in love*, may be able to *know the love of Christ* which passeth knowledge,” and thus “be filled with *all the fulness of God*.”

The meaning of the expression, however, in the original, here rendered “Be perfect,” is put together again or restore what was before deranged or out of joint. And if we suppose the Apostle to have had reference in his advice here, to those divisions and contentions which had formerly prevailed among the Corinthians, it might with much propriety be translated, be reunited, or be reconciled again. “The Apostle’s meaning,” says one of the commentators, “is, that whereas the members of the Church were all, as it were, *dislocated* or *out of joint*, they should be joined together again in love; and they should endeavour to make perfect, what was amiss among them, either in faith or manners.” And, in *this sense* also, I may be permitted to apply the exhorta-

tion to *you*, brethren. Whatever differences of opinion may have existed among you hitherto, suffer them to continue no longer. Be reunited and knit together in the bonds of Christian friendship and brotherly love. Have any, through dissatisfaction with some of their brethren, or with their Minister, or for any other cause, been prompted to withdraw from the communion of the Church or from the common worship of the Sanctuary? Or, are there any unholy, unfriendly feelings between different members of the congregation, which prevent the mutual interchange of social intercourse and good offices, or that union of counsel, influence and support, so necessary to the prosperity of the Church? O, my brethren, *be united again—be perfectly joined together in love.* Let not the welfare of your own souls, the interests of religion at large, or the advancement of the Church of your affections, *be hindered* by private views, by party prejudices, or by personal dislikes. Especially, now, when you have to provide a successor to him who is about to leave you, let *all dissensions* cease; and let the only emulation among you be, who shall show most attachment to the cause of Christ, who shall be most active in promoting the peace and unity and prosperity of his Church. *Be perfect; grow in grace—increase in holiness—be completely united, and steadfastly maintain “the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”*

The next part of the Apostle's advice is, “Be of good comfort;” that is, be not cast down, but take courage and put your trust in the Lord. This might have been intended to apply to such of the Christian brethren as had been overwhelmed with sorrow, produced by the severity of the Apostle's reproof in his former epistle. Finding them so tender of conscience, so easily affected by his rebukes, and so deeply penitent for their faults, he was probably anxious to raise them up from their despondency, and restore them again to cheerfulness and peace of mind. “Be not disheartened,” he

would seem to say, “you are sensible of your faults and sorry for them—you have renounced your errors and commenced a new course of action—“be of good comfort,” then—with humility and penitence cast yourselves at the foot of the Cross, and your sins and iniquities shall be remembered no more.”

In the same language would I address such of you, my brethren, as may be cast down by a sorrowful sense of past transgressions—look upon the Cross of Jesus Christ—see what he has done and suffered in order to take away your sins, and be not prevented from going to him, either by the number or the aggravation of your offences. But, be of good comfort, arise and seek confidently, the pardon which he has died to procure you.

In like manner, should you be called to struggle with the trials and distresses incident to human life—should disappointment and sorrow overtake you—should the waves of affliction and mourning break over your heads—should your pathway be beset with briars and thorns, and should the wide bosom of the world offer to your anxious eye nought but the prospect of a barren and trackless wilderness—still I would exhort you to “be of good comfort”—when trouble is near the Lord is not afar off—cast your burden therefore, cast all your cares and sorrows on him, and he shall sustain you.—Put your trust in him, and you *shall be* supported—Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and he will not suffer your feet to be moved.

And so, are there any of you sorrowful at parting with your Minister, to them also would I apply the Apostle’s words, “Be of good comfort.” This separation, though painful, is but for a time—*we shall meet again*—if not here in this world of trial, yet in that blessed world above, we may hope to meet, where there shall be no more separation—no more sorrow nor crying; but where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes. “Be of good comfort,” beloved—though sep-

arated in person, we shall be united in heart and affection—united in one common hope—united in prayer to the one God and Father of us all—united in pressing onward in the same narrow path, towards the same blessed mansion, which our common Lord and Master and only Saviour has gone to prepare for us.

The next advice of the Apostle is “Be of one mind,” or as the original may, more literally, be rendered, *think or mind the same thing*. This, of course, is not to be so understood, as if the Apostle meant to enjoin *a universal agreement* in matters of *mere opinion*. There are many things about which men may lawfully differ in sentiment; indeed, they are so variously constituted by nature, that *universal accordance* in opinion must be regarded as nearly impracticable. But the advice is given to *Christians*, and has reference, mainly, if not *solely*, to those doctrines and principles, by which *they* are to be distinguished from the rest of the world around them. In *these* it must be highly important that they *be of one mind*—a difference *here*, must necessarily involve consequences of the most disastrous kind. Of this, the Corinthians derived abundant proof from their *own experience*; when, according to the Apostle, there existed envying and strife and divisions among them. Their want of consent in doctrine—of oneness of mind in the duties of their Christian calling—had opened the door to many excesses, introduced confusion into their counsels, and well nigh totally destroyed their existence as a Church.

And such is the manifest tendency of *a want of union in sentiment*, among Christians at the present day. Well, therefore, may I, brethren, on taking leave of you as your Minister, exhort you, with the Apostle, to “be of *one mind*.” And this I would press upon you, as essentially necessary to your present well-being, and to your future prosperity as a Church. “Be of one mind,” in regard to the great doctrines of the Bible, as set forth and explained in the Liturgy, offices

and articles of the Book of Common Prayer. Suffer no one to unsettle your faith in those doctrines, or to lower your estimate of their importance. Give no place to that suggestion of the Devil, that articles of belief are of no value, and that you may be sound Churchmen and good Christians without troubling yourselves about doctrines and creeds. But hold fast your profession as Christians and as Churchmen, without wavering, and earnestly "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

"Be of one mind," also, in respect to the settlement and the treatment of your next Minister. In this matter, it is highly important that you should *think* or at least *speak, the same thing*. Without unanimity here, all human efforts to advance the prosperity of your Zion, must prove unavailing—and though you *may have* a Minister, yet his situation will be uncomfortable, and his prospect for usefulness among you, almost hopeless. Should you, therefore, be so fortunate as to obtain a Pastor willing to cast in his lot among you, who, possessing useful, if not showy talents, is sound in principle as a Churchman, evangelical in doctrine, holy in life, zealous and in earnest in the cause of Christ and the salvation of immortal souls; O, let no considerations merely personal, no private views, no capricious preferences of another, no party prejudices, prevent your being heartily *united* in contributing to his support and comfort, in strengthening his hands and encouraging his heart, and in convincing him, that, whatever differences there may be in *mere opinion*, between you and him, you are determined that, at least *in practice*, you and he, will be of "*one heart and one soul*."

Above all, brethren, be of one mind in regard to the great end of your Christian calling. In this respect, it is of infinite moment that you should all *think the same thing*, that you should fix your minds and hearts upon the *same object*, that you should agree to travel the *same road*. Let the one thing needful, the religion of the Gospel, the means of salvation,

be that in which you all agree, the object of all your exertions, the centre of all your hopes. In this let *us all be united—this*, let *us all* seek after, at all times, with *one heart* and *one soul*, so that when called to separate from one another in this world, as we must all sooner or later certainly look for, we may be comforted with the blessed assurance, that we shall meet again, in the world to come, around the throne of God.

The last particular of the Apostle's farewell advice is, "live in peace." This is an exhortation always needful in this world of tumult and strife, and well worthy of being heeded by all classes of men. But it is specially important that it be observed by them who are members of the household of *Him*, who is emphatically styled the *Prince of Peace*, and among *them*, if any where, we have a right to *look* for peace. It was the parting legacy bestowed by our "blessed Lord upon his Church, a little before his death, "*Peace* I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you." And it is only so far as this precious legacy is preserved among Christians at the present, that they truly deserve the appellation of disciples of Christ. If then, brethren, you would maintain the honour of the Christian name, and prove your claim to be counted followers of Jesus, "live in peace."

Be at peace among yourselves. Causes of offence *will* arise among you. Events will be perpetually occurring, calculated to try your patience, to irritate your temper, to provoke, perhaps, your indignation. But these must all be met by the exercise of the Christian virtues of forbearance, meekness, humility, gentleness and an affectionate, conciliatory disposition. Brethren of the same family must be mutually yielding, compliant and forgiving. "The servants of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all, patient, in meekness instructing all that oppose themselves," "forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

“Live in peace,” also with others, those who are not of the household of faith—even those who are not of the same mind with you, in religious things, according to that of the Apostle—“if it be possible as much as lieth in you live peaceably with *all* men.” Cultivate a friendly disposition towards them—seek all opportunities of doing them good—be not too ready to believe reports of their harsh expressions or evil designs towards you—and especially return not evil for evil, or railing for railing—but contrariwise, blessing.—And ever remember that *the true Christian spirit* prompts its possessor to *forgive* an injury, so soon as it is committed—so do, and you will “live in peace.”

But be careful above all things that you “live at peace” with God. This, brethren, is your *grand concern*. This is the point to which the whole circle of Christian virtues tend as to their centre. This is the sum of all Christian perfection—the goal to which *all* your efforts must be directed. And unless you attain to this, however you may live, you can neither *die* in peace, nor *dwell with* peace hereafter.—O, then, labour earnestly for reconciliation and peace with God; be faithful in the examination of yourselves, and importunate in your application to the great mediator of peace between God and man; be vigilant in keeping your hearts and ruling your lives. In fine—be perfect; be of good comfort; be of one mind; live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Yes, brethren, *God* shall be with you—he hath so declared by his holy Apostle, and he will keep his word. Be you but sincere and honest in your profession of attachment to his service—be but obedient and faithful, and you shall not be left destitute—God will come unto you and dwell with you in love and in peace. Be you of one mind and love one another, and the love of God shall fill your hearts. Be you perfect and live in peace, and the peace of God shall always attend you.

The God of love and peace shall be with you, to bless and

prosper his Church. He will not suffer his vineyard to languish, nor give his heritage to reproach. He will be a wall of defence to his people who trust in, and are obedient to his will, and will not suffer the foot of pride to come near to hurt them, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast them down—By his gracious presence, he will comfort them in their sorrow, and cheer them in the darkest hour of their desolation—He will make their “peace to be as a river, and their righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

And if the God of love and peace shall thus be with you, dear brethren, then be not dismayed at the approach of evil—be not cast down by the *appearance* of trouble; but take courage and trust in him. What he doeth unto you by his trials, ye know not *now*, but ye *shall* know hereafter. Hope in God, and you shall yet praise Him—seek a refuge in “the secret place of the most High,” and you shall *securely* “*abide* under the shadow of the Almighty.”

And now, beloved brethren, and friends, a few words more, and my message to you is ended. The ministry which I have so long exercised among you, is this day brought to a close. For eleven years, nearly one sixth part of the life of man, I have been your Minister, the appointed watchman for your souls—and during this long period, it is not improbable, that I may sometimes have erred, both in doctrine and in practice. But if there has been any thing in the instructions which I have given you, *inconsistent* with the *truth* and the *spirit* of Christ’s Gospel; if ever a word has fallen from my lips *ensorious* or *uncharitable*; if any part of my conduct has been at variance with the principles of the religion which I profess; and if, in any of these respects, I have been a stumbling block and a rock of offence, or have needlessly give pain to a single soul among you, as I most humbly pray for the pardoning mercy of God, so also, I here in sincerity crave *your* forgiveness. And as I would hope for this mercy myself, so do I most freely extend it to others.—

If there is a single person among you, whose enmity I have incurred, (I do not *believe* there is one in this whole community)—if any of you have ever done, attempted, or thought to do me evil, in word or deed, I do most heartily forgive him—as well as, most sincerely declare, that there dwells not the individual in this community towards whom I entertain any harsher feelings than those of kindness and good will.

Most sincerely, then, can I say to you *all, Farewell.*—And I heartily pray to God that you may, indeed, fare well, in all things—in your worldly business, in your family relations, in your religious interests—in life—in the hour of death, and throughout all eternity.

And now, brethren, let us draw near to the table of our common Lord and Saviour, and while there, celebrating his great sacrifice of himself for our sins, let us pray earnestly for ourselves, and for one another, that we may all be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, and live in peace—and that the God of love and peace may be with us both now and forevermore !

I think is a single person among you who is really I have
 answered. (I do not think there is one in the whole com-
 munity) — if any of you have ever been engaged in the right
 to the world, in word or deed, I do not honestly believe
 him — as well as, most sincerely believe, in the whole world
 not the individual in this community towards whom I speak
 main any honest feelings than those of kindness and good will.
 Most sincerely, then, can I say to you with, I believe,
 And I honestly pray to God that you may, indeed, feel with
 all things — in your worldly business, in your family rela-
 tions, in your religious relations — in times of the hour of
 death, as I throughout all eternity.
 And now, brethren, let us draw near to the table of our
 common Lord and Saviour, and whatsoever, whatever be
 great and little of himself for the world, let us pray earnestly
 for ourselves, and for one another that we may all be perfect
 be of good comfort, be of one mind, and be in perfect peace
 that the Lord of love and peace may dwell in our hearts
 and be glorified in us and in the world.